

For People Who Think Everything For People Who Think

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ON SALE AT THE NEWS STANDS AND ON TRAINS

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CONE PROPERTY IS CONSIDERED

We printed last week a half-page picture of a bunch of sky scrapers—hotel, office building, bank, apartment house—a fine array it was, and the reading matter suggested that such a group of business buildings would be possible if the Cone property was used for court house purposes. The architect didn't use very black ink for the zinc etching copy—but the advertisement caused many people to talk and wonder. That there is deep interest in the location of the court house, all agree. And as we said yesterday we have a half notion that there is an exaggerated idea about the location of a court house increasing values.

We recall that in Atlanta Fulton county went way out on Forsyth street and built her building. Maybe it was Pryor street—but across the railway tracks and out a good half mile from Marietta or Peachtree street. Then there was built a big office building for lawyers. It was called the Keyser Building—and was conveniently arranged as it was conveniently located. In a few short years the lawyers all moved out—went back to the sky scrapers uptown. The Keyser Building, known as the lawyer's building was occupied by printing offices; pressing clubs and real estate people—only three or four lawyers remaining. The principal business close to the court house was now and then a peanut stand and a soft drink establishment. In other words the location of the Fulton county court house meant nothing. In Durham there was never any business around the court house. The new building occupies the same site. Naturally business has expanded and now there is a play house near—but no mercantile business.

As a matter of fact the public building or the church on a business street always breaks the continuity of commerce. Take for instance Union street in San Francisco and because the best office building is along about Tenth street—two blocks are an open waste. Take any city and the public building—interferes with the commercial part of the city.

However, if those who want the court house located at a certain place make their fight, we hope the best man will win. We regret all can't win, but we think that a mistake has been made in delay. Too much discussion does no good. The town should pull together—not get up a fight that means dissension.

And another Saturday comes along—these Saturdays come with charming regularity. The world is divided into two classes—the man who makes the ghost walk and the man to whom the ghost walks. For the fellow who makes the ghost walk Saturday gets around sooner than to the other fellow.

The Mass Meeting.

We understand that the signers are still coming across and the mass meeting billed for Saturday to take action concerning the location of the court house will be largely attended. The trouble with the mass meeting is that there will be so many men of so many different minds that it will be hard to get any satisfactory result. One thing, however, the citizen who wants to express himself always has the right of way at a mass meeting. A protest signed in black and white would be more effective, provided the protest set out the grievance. Saturday is a very good day for the countrymen to come to town, and if the information is spread he will perhaps be here.

Small pox is abroad in the state, several towns reporting it. In these times when there is no quarantine law the disease spreads. There was a time when to say small pox meant the taking to tall timber. Nowadays people don't seem to stampede in front of it.

Coler's Railway.

It seems that Mr. Bird S. Coler has shown Greensboro a way to have a new railway. It has long been our talk that we needed one, and while it will take some two hundred thousand in bonds, we would consider that cheap enough. The fact that we would be nearer some markets; the fact that we would feel we had competition; the fact that several railways are needed in every live town makes it important that we take hold when the opportunity is offered. We do not know anything about railroads—that is what they cost or what they do—except we do know that progressive cities have several systems and oftentimes bonds have larger than Coler wants are voted to secure them. Let's get busy—let's all get together and have Coler's road come in. And then if there are any more in sight go after them.

For Deliberation.

The esteemed News rightly says there is no place for deliberation like a mass meeting. Yes, or a Doneybrook fair or a Roman holiday. That is also when deliberation has an outing.

Secretary Lansing denies that he is going to resign. Seems too bad that Washington newspaper men send out stories calculated to worry the President and which do no good in any way.

CLEANING UP GOLDSBORO

It is stated that Goldsboro had a hard time getting rid of her bad district; that it had been located in the town for a long time and it seems impossible to chase out the bats with the wounded wings. In order to make some progress along the cleansing line it is said that a powerful electric light has been placed in the vicinity of the neutral zone, and silent sentinels placed on guard to take down the names of all who enter the houses over which float the scarlet flag. These names are duly registered and the book is open to all who want to see.

This may do a little good, but the police court register is open, and in most places it is known that the newspaper prints the names of the delinquents, yet each day the court's grist is there. The way for any city to do is simply to get up and insist that such places have no right to exist, and close them. For many years it was thought in Durham that Smoky Hollow, one of the vilest districts ever having existence, must be endured, but finally the good women of the city declared it had to go, and after the right kind of a campaign the district went, and today where was No Man's Land stand mills and mill villages. True, there are some of the women of the underworld in Durham—a drag-net might disclose them—but the notorious flaunting of their shame in the faces of respectability has long ceased. Here in Greensboro the district was broken up; laws were passed which stopped men from renting houses for immoral purposes, and while perhaps there are a few crooks walking the streets and located in different places, there is no longer a line of hacks two miles long waiting to do business after nightfall. New Bern broke up her places of ill repute, Charlotte has decided that the women of sin must move on, and if the legislature will give us the Home for Delinquent Women the court will soon break up the traffic so far as its public prosecution is concerned.

And now they claim that robins are here all winter. Pretty soon this glorious climate will be far famed.

As to the Dog.

The mad dog scare is going the rounds and much discussion is now on concerning man's most faithful friend.

In an agricultural paper we have just read a column about the dog and his depredations, his sheep-killing proclivities and his general cussedness when he becomes a vagrant cur; but the article concludes by saying:

Keep the dog because he is in most instances a faithful helper, but keep him under proper restraint. It is largely the fault of man if the dog proves a nuisance and a menace.

And perhaps herein is the whole story. It is the fault of man if the dog goes wrong. Society must protect Youth. It dare not let it run wild, because when it does it at once goes to seed and to the bad. The dog has been man's best friend. In the early days he was largely a part of civilization. Under proper restraint he is all right. If he becomes an orphan and a vagabond, a tramp, a thief, a prowler, then treat him as we treat other criminals. But because there are some bad dogs—bad because of environment and circumstance—do not talk about exterminating the whole species.

The city planner will doubtless be worth while for future events, but the question is can he locate a court house within a week?

Pretty Good Law.

It appears that William J. Burns, the great private detective, and he is great, has been fined one hundred dollars for entering a law office and copying papers and giving the copy to his client. In this case J. P. Morgan and company were the clients—and the information was concerning the "how come" a leak on munition orders. Burns went after the information and secured it. The court held that a private detective had no right to enter a man's private office and copy his private letters. And the only wonder is that a mere fine was considered enough punishment. It looks to us that if we saw a private detective entering our office to secure private papers we would shoot him and be justified. Why isn't he the same as any other burglar or thief? Does the fact that he calls himself a private detective make him immune? Not at all.

February Next.

February is next stop—and we will have Washington's birthday; Lincoln's birthday and Saint Valentine's day—three propositions taking up red space on some of the calendars.

The Leak Investigation.

The leak investigation goes on in New York, and Lawson tells his tale of woe. Funny, though, the reading public long ago discounted the Lawson story. Perhaps a few read the daily grind, but no interest attaches. It might be proven now that there was a leak as large as the Mississippi river and all the public men of the nation might be found guilty of being beneficiaries, yet it wouldn't cause a thrill. Why? Because the public dismissed Lawson as a serious consideration, and that ends it.

NUDE PICTURES ARE TABOOED

The moving picture show people, now an association working together, have decided that all producing companies will positively cut out the nude, and also concluded that sex problems will be kept off the screen. This is as it should be and as it must be. The moving picture, like the drama, has progressed, and will progress. Now and then some company starts out with an ultra play, but it soon goes to the wall. The theater-loving people, as the movie-loving people, are not going to stand for things indecent. There is no reason why the nude should be introduced on the screen, any more than there was a reason why May Thompson's British Blondes could play to crowded houses twenty years ago. It was a money-making business for a while, but we will venture to say that even the bald-headed row will admit that such exhibitions were against good morals—and over all the world there is a great moral uplift. Social service workers, reformers, ministers, good people generally are seeing the baleful influences of the nude on the stage or the screen. The erotic novel is tabooed, and, after all, the people only get about what they demand.

The newspaper is yet to be censored. We have a notion that we will live long enough to be told that we can't print many of the stories now carrying the front page. The Nan Patterson episodes, the Harry Thaw demonstrations and all such stuff will be considered against public morals and forbidden. The freedom of the press is not a license to do harm, and as we progress the blue pencil must perforce come, not only in our plays and pictures and newspapers, but in our daily conduct.

The hope is that the commissioners will not finally be forced to accept the Sellers proposition and build the court house on the High Point road.

Too True.

Learnedly discussing the signs of the times, the Asheville Citizen is moved to exclaim: This seems to be the dawn of a new era. The faddist reigns supreme in the land, and a new cult is springing on the nation every hour.

Aye, it is true, as true as love or life or death or taxes; and yet the faddist is one of us; he has his place; he must needs be reckoned with. Some of the things that were fads pure and simple thirty years ago are today great principles of government. It has been in our time that the faddist was the prohibitionist, the woman suffragist, the man who thought lotteries should be suppressed, the man who clamored for clean books and clean shows; in fact, the faddists of thirty years ago would be the statesmen of today. And so we come and so we go. The cave man didn't care much about breakfast food, he didn't have a fad for jewelry, he didn't change his shirt oftener than once a year because it was a bear-skin garment; but he played his part. He lived and passed on, and no matter how much we might want to deny it, he was the bully boy with the vitreous eye who helped produce and propagate the human race.

A thousand years from now those who come will laugh at the antics of this age; they will call ours the Dark Ages, as we now call the ages of a thousand years back yonder. Men will marvel that we imagined we had advanced far in civilization—and yet some of us think the last word has been spoken.

The legislature isn't going to pass the medicine bill as it was sent in. The teeth are coming out, and should come out. The medicine man has some rights, and we do not think North Carolina will take them away from him.

The Medicine Law.

If the newspapers would discriminate, would print only the advertisements of legitimate medical concerns—throw out the fakes and the sensational advertisements, there perhaps wouldn't be much need for a new law.

The proposed bill which is before the legislature prohibits newspapers from printing certain advertisements—those of medicines containing alcohol. The prohibitionists believe that until the alcoholic medicines are prohibited they cannot have real prohibition. Perhaps this is true. But the old originals—the medicines like Hostetter's Stomach Bitters; Peruna of the old days, Begg's Dandelion Bitters—those erstwhile jag producing medicines are not now in evidence. They carried around forty to sixty per cent alcohol. In these days under the pure food law a medicine is not allowed to carry over fourteen per cent alcohol, as we understand it. However it doesn't require that much for preservative purposes, therefore the minimum should be the law.

On Their Job.

The Senate at Washington is now holding down the night shift in the hope of getting through by the 4th of March. It is understood that if it fails to clean up the proposed legislation there will be an extra session, and that may mean many a long day. So the distinguished gentlemen are working day and night, and this, too, in fear and trembling, as there are less than thirty days, and about sixty days' work ahead. But the hope is that all will end well.

TWO BIT MEAL IS LATELT FAD

Miss McClary, who has induced President Wilson to try the quarter meal—twenty-five cents per—feels confident that ultimately there will be a widespread demand for this new fad. It is claimed that we all eat too much; that we throw away money, and that accounts for the high cost of food and the high price of living.

The police squad in New York which started out to try the two-bit meal seems to be prospering; plenty to eat is the report, and if it is made a nation-wide fad naturally food products will fall in price.

However, we are not much on the new fad. We think that the poor devil who works—and we are one of him—should have all he can get to eat, if he wants it. If a man enjoys a beefsteak and it costs fifty cents, if he has the price let him buy it and eat it and enjoy it. There is no use to throw away money, but to start out in middle life to change the food and the diet doesn't appeal to us. Once in Boston, when the vegetarians were having a big boom and a dozen restaurants started, we were induced to try the newly discovered route to happiness. From vegetables they had imitation butter, imitation oysters, imitation lamb chops and imitation everything, and if a man could work up his enthusiasm, really feel it in his bones, he seemed to get along. It was perhaps plainly an exhibition of the mastery of mind over matter, but for our part we couldn't get the thrill. We could eat a meal of the new kind and then go out and get something to eat.

Colonel Sam Mulberry Sellers found ample to sustain life in raw turnips, but it was because he had nothing else to eat. He also got up plenty of warmth in his room by putting a candle in the stove and drawing upon the imagination. But any animal we see must have a certain amount of food, and the animal that is well fed looks the part. And so with people. We may disturb the stomach and digestive organs by allowing fancy cooks to fill us full of frills, but the man who sits down and spreads desolation through a double porterhouse steak isn't going around with much of a grouse. We have seen that we have passed along. And to get a "square meal" for twenty-five cents is hardly among the possibilities of this age. We are talking now about the solid, tangible stuff. You see men eat breakfast food and insist they have satisfied their appetites. Why? Because they were not hungry. But none of us ever saw an exclusive dinner food. Why? Because about dinner time the system has eaten up its fuel and demands something more than corn cobs or parched corn. If it were true that breakfast foods filled the bill, there would be dinner foods and supper foods put up in packages, but they don't do it.

There is, of course, a difference between the sane man and the gourmand, but all animals require something substantial and plenty of it, no matter whether it is baled hay or beefsteak, and man, we understand, is an animal.

There is this happy thought: They tell us that if the court house is located it will last for at least fifty years. Glory be! We won't be here to chip in on the next location.

Nothing in Sight.

The deficit still climbs up and those who figure on the future say it will be much larger than now estimated. And the only way to raise the kale seed is to tax men who have it. The American people submit to this process. When the republicans were in power they had a protective tariff; the treasury was always full; and when Grover Cleveland gave us free trade he gave us a bond issue in times of peace. Again the republicans came into power. McKinley and protection was the slogan. The full dinner pail came to succeed the empty one and we soon had more money than we knew what to do with. The Spanish war came on and we turned to the adhesive stamp to help out, but we didn't need to carry it that far. The revenues were so great that we stopped using stamps on our checks before the time limit. There was no deficit. There was no selling bonds. There was no income tax—which Thomas Jefferson said was iniquitous—and we all sailed along smoothly. The democrats wanted to give the laboring man a cheap coat, and they took the tariff off wool, and the laboring man pays more for his coat than ever. And so on down the list. Not only has the laboring man been stung, but the rich man has been stung. Then why not a protective tariff? Why go broke on a theory that doesn't pan out? Why not protect the home industries? Why not levy a tariff on importations and have money to burn? The only reason is it is a republican policy, and the democrats insist that free trade is quite the thing. We do not believe it.

Doesn't Get Far.

The "trade at home" slogan doesn't get far, it seems. Sears, Roebuck & Co., the big Chicago mail order house has just declared a twenty-five per cent stock dividend increasing the entire capital to seventy-five million dollars. All but eight million is common stock and the dividend rate was increased on that from seven to eight per cent. Think of the enormous profits this one concern has made, and then wonder if it is possible to get people to trade at home. Seems not.

GETTING TO BE MORE HUMANE

Senator Allen, of Wayne county, has introduced a bill which would abolish capital punishment in this state, except in cases of criminal assault, and then there must be two or more witnesses against the defendant.

We hope this bill will become a law. Capital punishment belongs to another age. To the age when men did murder because it was a sport. To the age when Draco wrote his laws in blood. To the age when Tammerlane butchered people and called himself the great general. To many people there is something abhorrent about these judicial murders. We noted in Guilford recently that many men when asked the question if they were opposed to capital punishment said they were. It has been ascertained by men who make a study of such things that the electric chair does not decrease crime. It has been claimed that often men who should be found guilty of crime escape altogether because juries will not find first degree murder which means death.

To put a man up for life. To take away from him forever his liberty. To make him work for the state his full allotted time, is better business than hanging him or cooking him to death with electricity. The hangman has been a long time on the screen. Human beings do not fear death if they are frenzied and have murder in their heart. When the French revolution was on the headsman had as many as fifty victims a day—the blood stained axe of the guillotine didn't stop people from doing what they wanted to do. There will always be criminals in the world. There will be vicious ones—but they can be restrained. Steel cages and iron bars and guards will protect Society. Capital punishment is believed in by many. We have always been opposed to it. We have ever insisted that a life sentence was better for Society. We hope the Allen bill will become a law. Perhaps not this time—but gradually we are growing to it.

We know that Walter Murphy will never lose his grip—but we want to see him lose the grip that now confines him to his bed.

The Fatherland.

We get on exchange, or rather complimentary, a publication called Our Fatherland, and it is the United States organ of Germany. The last issue takes a new view of the prohibition question, and the leading editorial is to the effect that by declaring it constitutional to stop whiskey from being shipped into dry territory the whiskey makers have achieved a notable victory. Then the paper argues that there is yet personal liberty in the breasts of men, and that when we finally have real prohibition the pendulum will swing the other way.

But we do not believe that now. The world has awakened. Germany has long been a beer drinking and wine drinking country, and therefore has never met the serious problem of milder drinks. The war has shown us that whiskey and alcoholic beverages are a terrible load, and that is why the governments of France and Russia cut them out and why England is seriously considering the drink problem. It is our belief that a new cycle is on—that whiskey belongs to an age that is passing. Our Fatherland may make itself believe that some other day whiskey will be invited back into this country, but we do not think so.

We frankly admit that there is much mystifying about the whiskey business. Here in the United States many states are dry—in fact, two-thirds of all our territory is dry territory—and yet the figures from the revenue department show that the consumption of whiskey was greater in 1916 than in any year since 1909, twenty-four million dollars more revenue than in 1915. Now, how can we account for that? Some say that the fraudulent whiskey manufacturers have been run out of business, but it hardly seems possible that there could have been so much whiskey made which didn't pay revenue. In the dry states, while whiskey is consumed, certainly not one tenth as much is consumed as under wet laws, and yet the last figures show us that there is an increase. We would like to understand just how to account for this.

Getting Better.

Editor Varner who has been looking after the white paper for the newspapers of the State was in Greensboro yesterday and says the situation is getting better, but it will be a long time yet before newspapers can get print paper at the right price. He says the only thing left is for all the papers to join hands and raise subscription and advertising rates. He is certain the reading public will understand that such a move is necessary. The newspaper publisher is certainly up against it, all his profits are being taken. We understand that most everything has advanced in price—but we know of no hold up like the white paper situation.

Experience.

After all, there is no teacher like Old Man Experience. Youth thinks it knows it all in about twenty minutes, but it doesn't. The older one gets the less he really knows, but when you tell a kiddie this he laughs at the gray beard and puts him down a has-been.